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comes responsible for you. He will provide for you spiritual armor. He will furnish you the daily rations of truth and grace to feed you. His precious promise is "my grace is sufficient for you." His guaranty is "no man shall pluck you out of my hands; because I live ye shall live also." Christ accepts no volunteer for six months or for a single campaign. If you enlist, you must *enlist for life*. On the blade of that sword of the spirit which the captain of your salvation hands to you is inscribed: "He that endureth unto the end shall be saved."

But you may inquire, "Just how ought I to feel, and just what should I be when I take the life-long obligation of church-membership on myself?" God's Word gives a very brief answer when it declares that if you trust in the Lord Jesus Christ you shall be saved. This inward faith must be evidenced by daily conduct. My own custom as a pastor, is to put into the hands of every applicant for admission into the church a brief statement of the nature of church-membership and the following six questions: (1) Have you seen yourself to be a sinner against God? (2) Have you not only repented of your sins and sought forgiveness, but do you hate all manner of sin and pray to be delivered from its dominion? (3) Is your hope of acceptance with God founded upon the Lord Jesus as your atoning Savior, and upon him only? (4) Have you given your heart to Christ, and are you willing to follow him whithersoever he shall lead you? (5) Is it your honest purpose—in reliance on his grace—to cleave to Christ as your Redeemer and your Guide to the end of life? (6) In order to maintain your Christian life do you make conscience of prayer and the study of God's Word as your daily rule of conduct?

You will notice that these interrogatories imply an enlistment for life. Also that they embrace the two core ideas of Christianity which are to abhor sin and to love Christ—to turn from sin and to follow Christ. These seem to my mind to be the scriptural evidences of regeneration. The new life in your soul may as yet be very feeble; it may be only the weak pulse beat of an infant; the blade of grace may, like the blades of grass in May, be very small; but if the life imparted by Jesus *is there*, then you may strengthen it by an open confession of Him. When Christ bestows converting grace he demands confession. Love prompts it. A fire kindled in a stove reports itself; concealment is impossible. If nobody among your associates ever suspects or supposes that you are a Christian, then you ought to doubt if you are one. Be honest with yourself and with God. Ask him to search you

and to guide you aright; and if after self-examination and testing you are persuaded that Jesus Christ has begun to live in your soul then openly enlist in his service. "Do you think that you love Christ?" I asked a young convert recently. The prompt answer was "I *know* it." Why should not he know it—for love is a conscious emotion and act of the heart. Do not hold back because enlisting for Christ involves responsibility and will excite the watchful observation of others. You *need that*; witnesses are intended to be watched and examined. If enlistment puts you into hard battles, all the better. Cowards and shirks win no victories and wear no crowns.

Pitch your standard high and then push on, and fight on up to your colors. Do not be disheartened by some failures and repulses; there is no soldier who has not known some defeats. Peter was badly defeated in Pilate's hall; but it made him a more watchful and a stronger warrior ever afterward. In religion as in war, it is going "under fire" that makes the true soldier. The Bible phrase "a perfect man" really signifies a *full-grown* man, but how can you reach that unless you begin?

Do you desire to be on Christ's side at the Day of Judgment? Then enlist on that side now, and say to your Master: "Lord, wherever thou art, whether in life or death, there will thy servant be!" His grace will confirm a weak will, and turn, by degrees, a fluid character into solid rock. Your leader is invincible; his army will yet be crowned conquerors in glory, and you may be among them. "To him that overcometh," is his soul-cheering promise, "will I grant to sit with me in my throne even as I sat down with my Father in his throne." Swords will turn to scepters—crosses into crowns.

Matrimonial

LEEDY—WISSINGER.—By the undersigned at the Brethren parsonage in Conemaugh, Pa., on April 20, 1899, brother Harry Leedy of the Fairview congregation and sister Cevilla M. Wissinger of the Conemaugh congregation were united in holy matrimony. May God's rich blessings attend them thro life.

J. F. KOONTZ.

Our Dead

PLAKE.—Mary Plake was born in State of Ohio on May 18, 1831, died March 16, 1899. Married John L. Plake Jan. 19, 1851. To this union were born seven children, the father and two girls preceded the wife and mother to the spirit land. The service improved by the writer from Matt. 5:8.

HOSS.—John D. Hoss, son of W. M. and Laura Hoss was born May 15, 1897, died March 17, 1899, aged 1 year, 10 months and 20 days. The funeral was held at the house on March 19, 1899, in the presence of a large congregation conducted by the writer from Revelation 14:5, And in their mouth was found no guile.

HOLWAY.—Lewis Holway, son of James and Nancy Holway was born July 10, 1881, and died April 11, 1899. He was 18 years, 9 months and 1 day old. Out of a family of ten children seven have gone to try the realities of the unknown world. The occasion improved by the writer from Rev. 14:15, 16.

M. D. ROBERTS.

Blessings in Disguise

The Christian.

We do not always know what is for our own good. Things which seem good prove to be evil. Things which seem to be evil work together for our good. When Jacob in his old age mourned the loss of his son, he said, "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me." (Gen. 42:36). And yet these things which he thought were against him were the workings of divine Providence on his behalf, and it was by these very things that God was pleased to deliver Jacob and his house from famine and from death. So the shades which seem to us to hang darkest may but precede the brightest day. The weeping which endures but for a night prepares us for the singing which comes in the morning (Psalm 30:5, margin). The assaults of enemies, which vex and grieve our souls, only prepare us for the day of peace and blessing, when conflicts and trials shall be over. Let us learn to watch and wait, and see what purposes of mercy God has for us even in hours of darkness and distress.

It is said that at the siege of Sebastopol a cannon ball, missing its aim, struck in the side of a neighboring mountain, and from the fissure made by it gushed a stream of crystal water. The instrument of death opened a life-sustaining fountain. So the missiles of our foes may open to us streams of blessing.

It is thru the fiery furnace and the lion's den that men come to victory, triumph and peace. Let us fear not to go forward. The Red Sea shall divide before us, but it shall close over the enemies of God; and He who has delivered His people in ages past will not forget us in the dark and trying hour.

In a Good Prayer-Meeting

Forward.

Prayers are plentiful and praiseful. Promptness is practiced by participants. Reverence rules the spirit of the meeting. The spirit of criticism is lost beneath the spirit of charity.

Unwillingness does not hide behind the name of modesty.

Every person present is listening for a message for himself.

The people have new songs to sing and new experiences to offer.

Christians are less anxious to make a speech than to speak a good word for Jesus Christ.

It is a place where believers come to meet with each other and with their Master, Jesus Christ.

Participants speak more from their heart's experience than from their head's erudition.

The service is more dependent upon the presence of the Spirit than upon the brilliancy of any man.

It is understood that the service should mean strength to those who must go out to battle with temptation. So it is a purposeful meeting.